

St John Fisher RC Primary School

Admissions Policy September 2024 - 2025



Mission Statement

'Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men'

As we walk in the footsteps of Jesus we let our **faith** shine through our prayers, thoughts, words and actions.

We welcome you as we would welcome our friends and family with **love**, respect and compassion.

We seek to be the best in all that we learn and do, showing creativity, self-belief and **passion** for learning and life.

We will have **courage** to change the world for the good of others and be proactive in protecting all of God's creation.

FAITH LOVE PASSION COURAGE

Approved by: FGB

Date: Feb 2023

Next review due by: January 2024

Admissions Policy

St. John Fisher R.C. Primary School, Haughton Green Policy for Admission to Reception Class 2024 - 2025

St. John Fisher is a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School provided by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford and maintained by Tameside Local Authority. The school's Governing Body is the admissions authority and has sole legal authority for taking decisions on applications for admission. The Governing Body's Planned Admission Number (PAN) is **30**.

The school's role is to participate in the mission of the Catholic Church by providing a curriculum, including Catholic religious education and worship which will help children to grow in their understanding of the Good News and in the practice of their faith. The school will help the children to develop fully and prepare them to undertake their responsibilities as Catholics in today's society. The school requires all parents applying for a place here to understand and respect our ethos and its importance to the life of our school community. This does not affect the rights of parents who are not of the Catholic faith to apply for a place here.

Admission to the school will be determined by the Governing Body. Parents must complete a Local Authority Preference Form or apply online via the website at www.tameside.gov.uk. If you wish to have your application considered against the school's religious criteria then you must **ALSO** complete the Supplementary Form which is available from the school at <https://www.st-johnfisher.tameside.sch.uk/adding-pages/admissions> or by contacting the school office.

Admissions Criteria

Admission to the school will be made by the Governing Body strictly in accordance with the following set of criteria. These will be used to form a priority order if there are more applications for admission than the school has places available. The criteria needs to be read in conjunction with the additional notes below.

1. Baptised Roman Catholic Looked After Children, Baptised Roman Catholic previously Looked After Children and Looked After Children adopted from overseas. *
2. Children with an exceptional social, medical, educational or religious need which can be best met, or only met at this school; **
3. Baptised Roman Catholic children who have a sibling in the school at the time of admission.
4. Baptised Roman Catholic children resident in the parish of St Mary and St John Fisher Denton.
5. Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children.
6. Other children who have a sibling in the school at the time of admission.
7. Other baptised Roman Catholic children resident in another parish.
8. All remaining applicants.

*A Looked-After Child is a child who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their Social Services functions (under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, or (c) who was in state care outside England but has now been adopted. A previously Looked-After Child is one who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

**Exceptional need of this kind will occur very rarely. It is strongly recommended that a written application be submitted in advance of the normal admissions timetable (See Point 9 below)

For categories 1 to 6, a valid Certificate of Roman Catholic Baptism is required to establish the faith of a child. This proof of Baptism must be supplied to the school by 15th January for verification, before the Governing Body's Admission Committee meets to allocate places. **Priority cannot be given to pupils within these categories without this documentary evidence.**

The Governing Body, not Tameside Local Authority, are the admissions authority. The Admissions Committee is comprised of the following: Headteacher and designated Foundation Governors including the Parish Priest. They are authorised to admit children in accordance with the Admissions Policy and up to the admission number set by the Governing Body.

Additional Notes

1. In the autumn term all parents who have expressed an interest in a school place will be sent a letter advising them where to access a downloadable copy of Tameside Local Authority's 'Primary Admissions Booklet' which gives details of the LA co-ordinated admissions arrangements and the online Application Form. These details are also available from local authority offices and public libraries.

2. All applicants will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions set by the Local Authority which is 15th January each year. **Applications received after this date will be treated as a late application and will not be considered until after the main allocation of places has taken place.** Children who have been formally referred under the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol or who are the subject of a formal direction by the Local Authority to admit must be given precedence over any other children on the waiting list.

3. Children with an EHCP (Education, Health Care Plan) where St John Fisher School (the main school and not the ASD Base) is specifically named within the plan (in accordance with the provisions of the SEN Code of Practice) will be allocated places before the oversubscription criteria are applied.

4. Late applications will be considered in accordance with the Admissions Policy. They will be admitted if a place is available but placed on the standing waiting list if not available.

5. Parents will be informed of the decision of the Governing Body by Tameside LA on the offer date in the Spring before admission. Parents should note that an offer of a place does not guarantee a place for brothers and sisters in subsequent years.

6. Parents should check carefully whether they are resident within the parish boundaries of The Catholic Parish of St. Mary and St John Fisher. A map illustrating parish boundaries as formally defined by the Salford Diocesan Boundaries Board is on view in the School Office.

7. It is the duty of Governors to comply with class size limits in Reception. This means that the school cannot operate classes in Reception of more than 30 **children**.

8. If in any category there are more applications than places available priority will be given according to the distance between the child's permanent address and the school. Distance will be measured as a straight line from the child's home address, using the address point assigned by the National Land and Property Gazetteer, to the main gate to the school property. Measurements will be made using the local authority's school admissions data mapping software, which uses a Geographical Information System based on Ordnance Survey.

9. Children are eligible for a Reception place from the beginning of the school year in which they become five years old. However they do not become of compulsory school until the start of the term after their fifth birthday. Parents may therefore request that their school place be deferred until later in the school year. However they cannot defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the school year for which the original application was accepted. Parents can also request that their child attends on a part-time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.

10. If a parent has chosen the school because the child has exceptional social, medical or educational circumstances or the parent is disabled, this should be indicated with the reasons for choosing the school. Parents must also provide a letter from a doctor or social worker as supporting evidence. If supporting evidence is not supplied with the application the application will be refused. A panel of governors will make a decision as to whether to admit a child under this criteria using the evidence provided. All information provided will be in the strictest confidence.

11. If an application for admission has been turned down by the school, parents can appeal to the Governing Body. Parents must submit their reason for appealing in writing to the Clerk to the Governors at the school within 14 days of notification of refusal. The Admissions committee will respond within ten working days. If the school's decision is upheld, parents can appeal to an independent Appeals Panel. To be successful, parents have to show that the decision was one which in the circumstances no reasonable Governing Body would have made, or that the child would have been offered a place if the Governing Body's admissions arrangements had been properly implemented. The decision of the independent appeals panel is binding upon the Governors.

12. Where the Governing Body discovers that a child has been awarded a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent (for example, incorrect details of a place of residence in the catchment area) which effectively denies a place to a child with a stronger claim, then the governing body is required to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

13. Admission arrangements to the Reception class are separate from those for the Nursery.

14. Attendance at the Nursery does not give a child any guarantee or priority when it comes to consideration by the Governors of applicants for admission to the Reception class. Although the admission arrangements for the Nursery are separate they are totally based upon the criteria in the main School Admissions Policy.

15. Home Address is considered to be the address where the child normally lives. Where care is split and a child moves between two addresses, the household in receipt of the child benefit would normally be the address used but the admission authority body reserves the right to request other evidence as fit the individual circumstance. Applicants should not state the address of another relative or person who has daily care of the child.

16. 'Sibling' is defined in these arrangements as full, half or step brothers and sisters, adopted and foster brothers and sisters who are living at the same address and are part of the same family unit. This does not include cousins or other family relationships. The child for whom the school place is sought must be living in the same family unit and at the same permanent address as the brother or sister. This allows for the priority admittance of children whose brothers and/or sisters will still be attending the school at the time of admission.

17. It is the duty of governors to comply with regulations on class size limits for children aged between rising five and seven. The Governing Board may exceed the regulations for twins and children from multiple births where one of the children is the 30th child admitted. This also applies to in-year applicants who are Looked After/previously Looked After Children of UK service personnel or children who move into the area for whom there is no other school available within a reasonable distance.

18. A waiting list for children who have not been offered a place will be kept and will be ranked according to the Admission Criteria. The waiting list does not consider the date the application was received or the length of time a child's name has been on the waiting list. This means that a child's position on the list may change if another applicant is refused a place and their child has higher priority in the admissions criteria. Parents should inform the school of any significant change of circumstances, such as a change of address, which will be taken into account: evidence must be provided. The waiting list will operate for the whole of the academic year.

19. For 'In Year' applications received outside the normal admissions round, if places are available they will be offered to those who apply. If there are places available but more applicants than places then the published oversubscription criteria will be applied.

20. For 'In Year Fair Access' applications school will follow the guidance published by the DfE <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2> Statutory categories of children who can be placed under the Fair Access protocol now encompasses wider categories of children including – children in need children or children with a child protection plan, children in kinship care arrangements, children who have been out of education for four weeks or longer and previously looked after children.

21. If a child is a "summer born child", parents may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1. However, the child must start school before the end of that school year. If a parent wishes their child to be educated out

of their normal school year they must discuss this with the school before applying. Decisions are made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social, and emotional development and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. However the final decision rest with the Headteacher. Parents will be informed of the decision and the reasons for the decision.

22. Where it has been agreed to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to Reception the local authority and school will process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. The application will then be given equal priority to other applications. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

23. ASD Base Please note that arrangements for children with a statement for Autistic Disorders for admission into the ASD Resource Base are separate from admission to the mainstream school.

Definitions

Parent

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' includes:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person;
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

Proof of Address

Parents must provide TWO proofs of address from the following list:

- Mortgage Statement*
- Tenancy agreement or letter from landlord*
- Council Tax Statement*
- Council Tax benefit statement*
- TV licence*
- Home contents insurance certificate*
- Buildings insurance certificate*
- Recent utility bill (gas, electricity, water, land-line telephone bill but not a mobile phone bill)**
- Letter from a solicitor confirming exchange of contracts on a house**

(*issued within the last 12 months; ** issued within the last 3 months)